



HB 42- SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL SURCHARGE AND WASTED FOOD REDUCTION AND
DIVERSION FUND AND GRANT PROGRAMS

**TESTIMONY OF BRITTANY BAKER, MARYLAND POLICY DIRECTOR AT THE
CHESAPEAKE CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK**

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

The Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund and Grant Programs aim to aid Maryland in its efforts to reach our emissions reduction targets and food waste diversion mandates. By implementing a two-dollar surcharge on final waste disposal, HB42 will be able to raise fourteen million dollars in funding for food waste reduction and diversion projects.

Grant funds will be available to local community groups such as small businesses, schools, and nonprofits and priority funding will be sent to historically overburdened and underserved communities. Activities eligible for funding include but are not limited to food rescue operations, waste reduction education, and county and municipal scrap collection.

The bill specifically sets aside 25% of funding for on-farm organics diversion and recycling programs such as cold storage and composting infrastructure, helping them get the most out of their produce without incurring extra costs.

HB42 also has the benefit of stimulating economic growth in the state and helping Maryland households save money. Food rescue operations funded by this bill will generate new jobs and investment in alternatives to landfilling and burning trash will combat rising disposal costs. Additionally, initiatives funded by the grants in this bill will help families avoid losses from food waste for up to \$1,500 a year per four person household.

By passing the Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund and Grant Programs, Maryland would join ten other U.S. states that have already implemented similar programs and seen the economic benefits that they provide.

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB42